DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 122 721 HE 007 883

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TITLE State Budgeting for Higher Education.
PUB DATE Jan 76
NOTE 8p.
AVAILABLE FROM NACUBO, One Dupont Circle, Suite 510, Washington, D.C. 20036
JOURNAL CIT NACUBO Professional File; v8 n1 Jan 1976

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Personnel; Budgeting; Capital; Decision Making; *Educational Finance; Expenditures; *Financial Support; *Higher Education; *Institutional Research; Money Management; Policy Formation; Program Development; State Action; *State Aid; *State Government

ABSTRACT

State government is and is expected to remain the chief source of funding for higher education. At the same time, the state is confronted with serious policy issues relating to support of research, public services, and adult education, to falling enrollments in some public institutions, to the probable closure of some private liberal arts colleges and perhaps some public ones, to the continuing oversupply of doctoral graduates, to competition with the collegiate sector of new forms and new institutions offering postsecondary education, and to additional issues relating to finance in a period of high inflation and severe recession. These related situations are discussed, and it is suggested that the lack of direction or focus is causing concern among legislators and governors, although there is a sense of optimism among college and university presidents. It is concluded that institutional research staffs and policy analysis groups can contribute substantially to the well-being of an institution by aggressively pursuing with state agencies objectives and goals backed by data-based realism and imaginative analysis. The future is not bleak for institutions and staffs that recognize the trends and take action either to change them or respond to their demands. (LBH)

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State Budgeting for Higher Education

by Lyman A. Glenny

State government remains the chief source of funding for higher education, and nothing on the horizon would appear to change that observation for the future. The public senior institutions rely most heavily on the state for funds; the community colleges do so to a lesser but increasing extent, and the private institutions, currently subsidized by the state through tax exemptions and student tuition grants, seek more state largesse in the future. Concurrently, the state is confronted with serious policy issues relating to support of research, public services, and adult education, to falling enrollments in some public institutions, to the probable closure of some private liberal arts colleges and perhaps some public ones, to the continuing oversupply of doctoral graduates, to competition with the collegiate sector of new forms and new institutions offering postsecondary education, and to a host of issues relating to finance in a period of high inflation and severe recession.

Necessity of Mutual Accommodation

The well-being of many institutions and the very survival of some rely on the mutual accommodation of the particular college or university with the state government. In some states this relationship is that of a single institution dealing with governmental agencies. In other states the institution must first find its place within a system of colleges or university branches, and in many states these systems of institutions must relate to other systems through mechanisms and plans of a state coordinating board. Whatever the particular arrangement, the individual college or university—public or private—must take the initiative in defining its future mission and capabilities, or some state agency is likely to do so. The private sector is included because, as the privates increasingly receive public funds directly through grants or indirectly through students, the institutions become public de facto, and will be treated as such by state executive and legislative agencies. The history of state government supports this view.

With rare exceptions, institutional definitions of function and programs for the future will be reviewed, second-guessed, and modified by one or more agencies of the state in which it is located. The social and political environment for resolving institution-state issues is very complex and very different from that during the great expansion period of ten years ago. Institutional officers and research staffs must comprehend these environmental complexities and gear their data bases, information systems, and planning efforts to this context if they are to have a substantial role in determining their own fates. Presidents in particular must be helped to understand such external factors as demographic trends, vital statistics, student demands, and job-market trends, as well as certain internal factors that are discussed later in this paper.

Many institutional officers appear to be unaware of the vast changes taking place in structure and power relationships among agencies dealing with higher educational matters, with the competitive challenges of new institutions and new modes of instruction, or with the form and content that institutional plans must have in order to adjust in a positive and aggressive way to the emerging new world of postsecondary education.

The least understood aspect of this new world may be the fundamental shifts in power relationships among state agencies as they deal with budgeting, planning, and coordination of institutions of higher education. The social context for establishing new institutions or new roles for existing institutions in the 1960s was one of almost unbridled expansion and optimism. Enrollments, funds, and buildings all grew massively; and each senior institution, new or old, seemed to aspire toward status as a graduate research institution. Junior colleges proliferated to become community colleges; in some cases, they became senior colleges.

State governments responded to the growing complexity and problems of expansion by creating a variety of coordinating and planning boards or councils. These new

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agencies and institutions operated in a political context of relative simplicity. Most governors' budget offices had small staffs and rarely a specialist for higher education. In state legislatures, a political assistant might sometimes be found, but professional staffs were virtually nonexistent.

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Coordinating boards thus entered a near vacuum with their staffs of professional specialists in planning, budgeting, and program development. Such agencies were in an ideal position to create a favorable record of accomplishment, for both the governor and legislature relied increasingly on the coordinating board for planning and initiating policy. By the late 1960s most such agencies had completed one or more planning cycles, and the plans—almost without exception—anticipated unending increases in the number of young people and the proportion of high school graduates who would attend colleges or universities.

Today institutions and coordinating agencies face a very different political and operational environment[1]. By 1970 the staffs of many governors' budget offices were expanded to include professional specialists for higher education. These analysts reviewed the budget and programming work of both the institutions and the statewide boards. The executive budget became the instrument which largely determined the allocation of funds among state services and among public institutions of higher education. As funding constrictions and unexpected enrollment drops occurred, many coordinating staffs moved toward closer association with the increasingly powerful governor and away from the legislature and the institutions.

Concurrently, many legislatures began to combat actively the continuing accretion of gubernatorial power. They, too, hired professional staff for research units and for the appropriations and finance committees. In the last four years the growth of these legislative staffs has been very great. Specialized staffs equal to those of the governors are not uncommon. Economists, political scientists, accountants, and managers now aid legislators in dealing with the operating agencies of government. Moreover, more legislatures than governors have established new program review-and-performance audit agencies or have added that function to an existing office. It is not uncommon for a public college or university budget request to be reviewed seriatim by the state coordinating board, the executive budget office, and from one to four different legislative committee staffs. After appropriation, expenditures may be pre-audited and after expenditure both a fiscal and program audit may ensue. Colleges and universities increasingly exhaust their planning and management resources in responding to the plethora of executive and legislative staff requests. Little time remains for educational program planning or operational developments which legislators and governors want desperately and which, if institutions are to survive in the next twenty years, must take place.

The environmental context is further complicated for institutions by federally-initiated programs for buildings, continuing education, instructional equipment, and student aid, along with the accompanying regulations for dealing with affirmative action for women and minorities. Rather than assign administration of these programs to existing coordinating or statewide governing boards, the states often have created new agencies.

Primarily because of this proliferation of state agencies the federal government sought to create a single comprehensive planning agency in each state by means of the Education Amendments of 1972. These so-called "1202 commissions" (identified by the number of the section in the law) were to involve all of postsecondary education in planning and in commission membership—public, private, proprietary, and vocational-technical institutions. A few states took advantage of this opportunity to unify the separate boards of the federal programs, while others awarded the 1202 functions to the existing coordinating board. However, some fifteen states created still another new agency. The unfortunate result of these developments has been to increase the ambiguities for responsibility for state planning and operations. Institutions must deal with an array of state boards and commissions for segments and systems of higher education, as well as with expanding executive and legislative staffs. While all of these may not have budget functions, most of them do.

Less Money Awarded to Institutions

Further, federal funding patterns emerging during the last five years award less money directly to institutions and more to students through grants and work-study programs. The federal policy of aiding students through the institution has led the government into an extremely complicated set of administrative arrangements with the colleges and universities as it attempts to achieve federal objectives rather than the more parochial objectives of the institutions. Also, it is not clear whether state and institution budget planners have considered the operational consequences of federal student aid programs, much less recognized them as integral to effective financing. Yet if the thrust of federal funding continues toward student aid as appears destined, these programs require integration operationally with similar state aid programs and with state financing and institutional budgeting.

These new complexities of the political and organizational environment for institutions require different data

[1] L. A. Glenny, et al, *Coordinating Higher Education For the 70s.* (Berkeley, Ca.: Center for Research and Development in Higher Education, University of California 1971).

and information bases as well as new perspectives on the decision-making process. But probably more important for societal welfare and institutional survival is the resolution of the confrontation between the new forms, modes, and types of agencies for offering postsecondary education on the one hand, and the institutions of higher education, both new and old, facing drastically changing enrollments on the other. The optimization of resources for higher education is already impaired by lack of knowledge of the scope and form of postsecondary education, and lack of consensus on planning strategies—or even on the need for planning.

Downturn in Enrollments Noted

The recent downturns in enrollments are attributable to a reduction in percent of high school graduates who attend college. Census Bureau data[2] show that nationally we have already returned to the college-going rate of 1962—about 47 percent of high school graduates and 31 percent of the age group of 18- to 21-year-olds. Yet while the college attendance rates have gone down, the number of 18- to 21-year-olds—the traditional college group—has increased by a million in the last three years. The number will increase by another million to about 17.4 million in 1980 and thereafter drop rapidly. By 1984 there will be only 16 million—the same as fall 1973—and by 1992 the number should be only 13.7 million, the same as the mid-1960s. There will be a 21.6 percent drop in the number of 17- to 21-year-olds between 1980 and 1993.

Thus the decline in college-going rates indicates the competitive reality of new institutional forms and means of offering education. Students turn from college or university to look elsewhere for education and for work. Dislocations in enrollment now affect very unevenly the various states and different types of institutions within a state. Some continue to gain enrollments while others suffer substantial losses; and so it will be in the future, at least until 1993.[3] Therefore it is unwise to consider current dislocations as temporary.

Enrollment fluctuations among types of institutions are severe, but within institutions similar fluctuations take place among the disciplines, requiring a substantial redistribution of resources. The Census Bureau[4] reports that in the six years from 1966 to 1972 the biological, health, and social sciences, together with business and commerce, increased from 30 to 38 percent. Conversely, engineering and the physical and earth sciences were down more than 30 percent and education by 10 percent. The data show that shifts within institutions may be even greater than these national averages, causing administrators and faculties grave problems in obtaining new professors for the expanding fields, while decreasing faculty (some tenured) in other fields—this in an institution that may be steadily losing total enrollment, thus eroding its funding base. In a study of state general revenue appropriations for higher education, the Center at Berkeley found that two-year colleges were keeping well ahead of inflation, state colleges a little ahead, and state universities were falling behind in number of dollars appropriated per FTE student.[5] That fact heavily influences the amount of flexibility and budget slack for some public institutions to respond creatively to the new conditions.

In the same Center study we find tentatively that regardless of the purposes for which higher education funds are directed—whether for new medical schools, for aid to private colleges, for state scholarship and grant programs, or for state college budgets—the total proportion of the budget going to higher education does not increase. When funds are given directly as grants or indirectly through students to the private institutions, the money in effect comes from that traditionally alloted to the public institutions. An updating of this study should either verify or invalidate this finding.

The federal policy of aiding students through the institution has led the government into an extremely complicated set of administrative arrangements with the colleges and universities as it attempts to achieve federal objectives rather than the more parochial objectives of the institutions.

Another finding of the state budgeting study was that higher education has reached a new low in terms of priority among state services. This has been further confirmed by R. T. Soderberg[6] of the California department of finance who surveyed the ten western state budget directors and found that higher education had very low priority, well below elementary and secondary education.

Given this greatly changed climate of opinion and attitude toward higher education and the structural and political context within which it seeks support, what are institutions and coordinating agencies doing or intending to do for institutional welfare? At the state level, Center studies show relatively little long-range planning taking place. With few exceptions among the states, planners are not engaged in conceiving new initiatives in programming,

[2] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *Characteristics of American Youth 1974* (Washington, D.C.: Current Population Reports, Series P-23, No. 51, 1975, p. 9.)

[3] See author's article, "Nine Myths, Nine Realities: The Illusions of Steady State," *Change* Magazine, December-January 1974-75, for delineation of the uneven impact of enrollments and funding on various types of institutions, states, and regions.

[4] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *Characteristics of American Youth 1974* (Washington, D.C.: Current Population Reports, Series 9-23, No. 541, February 1975.)

[5] L. A. Glenny and J. Kidder, *Trends in State Funding in Higher Education.* (Denver, Co.: Educational Commission of the States, Report No. 33, January 1973, p. 8.)

[6] R. T. Soderberg, "Responses to Survey of State Budget Notables." (Sacramento, Ca.: Audits Division, California State Department of Finance, September 1974.)

in setting system goals, in reviewing or redefining institutional missions, or in establishing other parameters for the development of individual campuses within a system of public and private institutions. Certainly, few pay much attention to other postsecondary forms or agencies, much less take them specifically into account in their planning.

Lack of Focus Causes Concern

We also find legislators and governors much concerned over the lack of direction or focus in higher education. It is not suggested that there is utter chaos at the state level, but actions taken thus far fall far short of political expectations and, given the conditions and trends already known, short of requirements to meet the new realities. If state-level higher education agencies appear naive and incapable of grasping the significance of the changes for higher education in the postsecondary world, how do institutional leaders deal with the issues and the intensely competitive relationships arising from this context? The answer is very much like that of the state-level people. In a survey of 2,500 college and university presidents conducted by the Center for the Carnegie Council for Policy Studies in Higher Education[1] on how institutions were responding and planning to respond to leveling enrollments and funding patterns, there were a variety of interesting, unexpected, and incongruous responses.

The survey revealed that 63 percent of the presidents reported headcount enrollment increases of 10 percent or more in the last five years, and 46 percent expected to have that much of an increase in the next five years. However, whereas 16½ percent had decreases of 10 percent or more in enrollment in the last five years, only 4½ percent expect that much decrease in the next five years.

Only 6 percent of the presidents indicated a decrease of 10 percent or more in real dollars per FTE student in the last five years, and only 4 percent estimated that much reduction in the future. As previously noted, the Center study on state general revenue shows a quite different picture. Private institutions obtain about 30 to 40 percent of their funds from sources which relate little to enrollment and thus have kept up better in real-dollar terms per student than have the publics. Also, some private institutions, especially the liberal arts colleges, have experienced enrollment reductions but not comparable losses of revenue; hence their real dollars per student increased.

The survey revealed that the presidents expect relatively little change in funding patterns to 1980 compared to the recent past. Seventy percent of all presidents still expect increases from state government but are much less optimistic about the federal government. On the other hand, they are optimistic about private donations as opposed to government sources.

As an aid in assessing trends for the types of students who would be recruited, the presidents were asked to indicate the extensiveness of their efforts to recruit among nine classes of students. As one might expect, the largest single percentage figure in either time period is toward recruitment of traditional students. But whereas only 5 percent more will recruit extensively for these, 28 percent more will do so for adults over 22, 26 percent more for evening students, 22 percent more for off-campus students, 20 percent more for early admittees from high school, 19 percent more for transfer students, and 17 percent more for previous dropouts. Clearly, the emphasis is on the adult student and those attending at times and places different from those of the traditional on-campus student.

For undergraduate and graduate levels, the presidents are far less optimistic about the number of new programs than they were in the past. Almost a quarter fewer presidents estimate increases. On the other hand, 11 percent more presidents expect to increase the number of programs for extension, evening, and continuing education students.

Presidents Reveal Optimism

All our data show that higher education was truly expansionist in the recent past and, while the percentage of presidents reporting further increases by 1980 is somewhat less on most items, a definite sense of optimism pervades their attitudes toward the future. Even those who have already suffered enrollment and funding losses estimate the future with sanguinity. The administrators are sufficiently satisfied with their recent tactics and strategies for recruiting new clientele, adopting new programs, and meeting staffing needs, to report no major changes in activities beyond those already underway in 1974. Adjustment, if any, will be more of the same. By doing the same they expect conditions to be better, and certainly no worse than at present.

Given the public and political attitudes about higher education and the great changes occurring in the types and kinds of institutions and agencies engaged in postsecondary education, the expectations of presidents often seem unrealistic. While it has been my impression that state planners and coordinators are perhaps more aware of those changed attitudes and conditions, they, like the presidents, also tend to stick with the status quo. So far, few have rocked the boat of complacency until a genuine

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[1] L. A. Glenny, et al, *Presidents Confront Reality: From Edifice Complex to University Without Walls.* (San Francisco, Ca.: Jossey-Bass, in press.)

crisis arises from real budget cuts by governors or a drastic drop in enrollment occurs.

Searching Questions Are Asked

The dictates of Governor Lucey of Wisconsin to the state university system, when he requested the state board of regents to draft a plan for phasing out or consolidating state institutions and programs, are likely to come within the next few years to most state systems in the nation. Currently, other governors as well as legislators are asking ever more searching questions about the role of institutions of higher education.

Higher education is unquestionably very important to the state for improving the quality of life and the economic welfare of its citizens — an importance which will increase rather than decrease in the future. However, if the college-going rate is an indicator, what higher education now offers probably meets the needs of only a minority of either youth or adults. The new emphasis on postsecondary education reflects this fact. Industrial, military and governmental training agencies, proprietary institutions, and a host of churches, social organizations, and labor unions now extend opportunities highly underestimated in their number and omnipresence and underrated for their educational contributions. These are the institutions which predominately compose the postsecondary world. The Commission on Nontraditional Study[8] reported that more than 32 million persons engage in such education — far more than the 8 to 9 million degree enrollments in colleges and universities. The trends as currently perceived indicate that institutions of higher education will enroll an ever-diminishing proportion of the total pool of persons who seek education beyond the high school.[9]

The changing institutional patterns for offering training and education are paralleled by an equally broad array of new means of delivery such as audio and video tape cassettes, closed and open circuit TV, and independent study. The potential of these means of delivery by agencies other than colleges has as yet hardly been tapped.

Institutions of higher education have made some aggressive moves to compete in this new environment. Colleges and universities give credit for previous experience, for participation in social action, for a year abroad, and for other activities historically foreign to higher education. However, few of these build up campus enrollments or credit hours for budget-generating purposes.

As enrollments drop or level off, staff members of colleges and universities seek new constituencies to serve—primarily adults from all walks of life as well as low-income students. Private colleges make contracts with industries for adult education and also engage in extension activities formerly the sole province of the large metropolitan private universities. State colleges, badly affected by enrollment slippage, offered little extension work in the past but now do so through off-campus centers, late evening and weekend classes, and correspondence courses — many of which have recently been relabeled for residence credit.

The greatest uncertainty, given these new thrusts toward attracting the adult student, is knowledge of the exact size of the adult education pool. Some enrollment projections for higher education assume that adults will more than make up for any enrollment losses of young people. Other scholars, and this author, are not convinced that the rate of growth of adults in colleges and universities will increase more than the overall population. Rather, the options available to adults for other types of postsecondary institutions are likely to be chosen. Nevertheless, many four-year institutions, both public and private, that have never catered previously to adults now actively recruit them. A few will be successful; others will waste resources in a market which does not materialize.

An aggressive, realistic planning mode is the best defense against imposition from without of roles and programs for an individual institution.

If adults are successfully recruited to make up for enrollment declines among young people in public institutions, the state must decide who is to pay the cost. In the past, most direct costs of extension and off-campus courses were paid by the student; now, by giving resident credit for such work, many state institutions bring these enrollments within state-funding formulas for regular daytime students. Few states have faced this issue directly, but the recession and inflation are causing more and more states to decide on financing responsibilities for adults.

Importantly, the new instructional forms and modes are not minor adjustments in education: They have revolutionary import and should be at the heart of institutional planning. Robert Nisbet[10] has called for reassessment of institutional missions and goals in the face of such change: He predicts that most colleges and universities will become more parochial, meeting local and regional interests and needs rather than national ones.

Governors and legislators seem to be more acutely aware than educators that the climate and environment for postsecondary education is in a volatile state of flux. They want the state-level agencies and the institutions to take a more studied and aggressive stand on how and in what dimensions each campus will fit into the new spectrum of agencies and modes of education.

State pressures for better and more comprehensive long-range planning undoubtedly are going to come from the

[8] Commission on Nontraditional Study, *Diversity by Design*, Samuel B. Gould, chairman. (San Francisco, Ca., and London: Jossey-Bass, 1973.)

[9] S. Moses, "Notes on the Learning Force: Notes on The Future of Education." (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University publication, February 1970, p. 7.)

[10] Robert Nisbet, "The Decline of Academic Nationalism," *Change Magazine*, Summer 1974, p. 26.

politicians and will be directed at the state coordinating and planning boards. Individual institutions will be caught in the intricate web of committees, task forces, and special teams which large-scale planning efforts at the state level entail. Very few presidents will have well-thought-out ideas about the future roles and functions that their institutions can perform optimally within the competitive postsecondary environment, and fewer still will have actual plans to achieve their objectives. Thus, most institutions and campuses will be vulnerable to the point of helplessness to ideas and designs imposed on them by outside forces and agencies.

An aggressive, realistic planning mode is the best defense against imposition from without of roles and programs for an individual institution. The stance requires new perspectives on the institutional role in the wide spectrum of postsecondary institutions and also new data bases for providing more meaningful assessments of internal operations and of faculty and student trends that bear on policy issues.

Policy and planning purposes require assessment from many new or expanded data sources, with the results provided in a format easily and quickly understood by policymakers on campus and off. Elaborate costing studies can be much more easily boiled down by using Gulko's Cost Information and Reporting System[11] than by the more elaborate and detailed reports produced by NCHEMS or CAMPUS[12] models. Models for management of faculty, such as that developed by Hopkins at Stanford,[13] and those of Balderston[14] on internal resource control, are not elaborate or complicated but can effectively comprehend an extremely complex set of variables and yet be quickly grasped by college administrators.

Strong Plans Invite Support

Institutional research staffs and policy analysis groups can contribute substantially to the well-being of an institution by aggressively pursuing with state agencies objectives and goals backed by data-based realism and imaginative analysis. State plans can then support strong institutional plans rather than initiate models and procedures for imposing state-conceived priorities. An institutional planning vacuum invites state intervention and domination, whether through a state plan or ad hoc decisions. A well-thought-out plan based on realistic assessment of an institution's strengths and potential invites state support and cooperation rather than control. At a minimum, institutional staff ought to know more about its students, faculty, programs, operations, and plans than do the state agencies — a condition often unverified by current research.

The future is not bleak for institutions and staffs that recognize the trends and take appropriate actions either to change a trend or to respond to its demands in meaningful ways. But analyses, plans, and action must be bywords if success is to be assured.

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[11] W. W. Gulko, G. Beatty, Jr., and B. S. Sheehan, "The Instructional Cost Index: A Simplified Approach to Interinstitutional Cost Comparisons." (Denver, Co.: Paper presented at the ninth annual meeting of The Society for College and University Planning, July 15, 1974.)

[12] Comprehensive Analytical Methods for Planning in University Systems, Toronto, Canada.

[13] D. S. P. Hopkins and A. Bienenstock, "Numerical Models for Faculty Planning," *Assuring Academic Progress Without Growth*, Allen M. Cartter, Ed. (San Francisco, Ca.: Jossey-Bass Inc., 1975.)

[14] F. E. Balderston, "Cost Analysis in Higher Education." (Berkeley, Ca.: Paper P-33, Ford Foundation Program for Research in University Administration, University of California, Berkeley, July 1972.)

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